NATO Expeditionary Operations: Impacts Upon New Members and Partners

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occasional paper

Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE **MAR 2005**	2. REPORT TYPE **N/A**	3. DATES COVERED **-**	

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
NATO Expeditionary Operations: Impacts Upon New Members and Partners	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **National Defense University Institute for National Strategic Studies Washington, DC**	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release, distribution unlimited**

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES **The original document contains color images.**

14. ABSTRACT

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**	**UU**	**46**	

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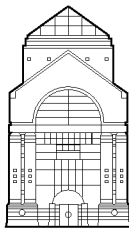
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First printing, March 2005

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Summary

Ever since deployments into the Balkans in the mid-1990s, the involvement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in military operations beyond the territories of its members has posed both challenges and opportunities for the increasingly numerous post–Cold War Alliance partners, a number of whom have since acceded to full membership. Broadly, what kinds of lessons have new NATO members and partners drawn from these expeditionary operations? And how have these experiences influenced ongoing efforts aimed at transforming their defense postures?

NATO operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina concluded only at the end of 2004. While building their forces either from Warsaw Pact legacy capabilities or from scratch, NATO aspirants and partners learned that conscript-based forces that had utility for territorial defense had serious limitations for expeditionary operations. These Central and East European governments recognized that they needed rapidly deployable forces with independent logistics and a sufficient cadre of well-trained English-speaking military personnel for effective involvement in peacekeeping and related operations. The Bosnia experience thus became the catalyst for more realistic defense reform among then-NATO aspirants.

Among lessons learned from Kosovo operations (1999–present) by Alliance aspirants was the difficulty of shifting from territorial defense to expeditionary operations, as well as the necessity to make adequate resources available for such operations and to realize their plans to restructure and/or build their forces.

Balkan-based operations have been out-of-area, but they were also relatively close to home and have been more easily understood by new

NATO member and partner societies. Both Kosovo and Bosnia have demonstrated the Alliance's need for constabulary units, which are a better match for dealing with civil unrest in the postconflict period, as well as greater civil affairs capacity to assist in judicial and correctional operations. In Kosovo (as well as in Bosnia), some participants adopted rules of engagement (ROEs) and other procedures that tended to impede force interoperability. Hence, NATO needs to grapple with the issue of how to standardize national mandates and ROEs for its out-of-area (OOA) operations. What remains a challenge to NATO is the fact that the lack of an end-state in Kosovo has inhibited the building of armed security forces there, thus preventing planning for a military "presence" role.

More distant NATO expeditionary operations began in late 2001 with deployments into Afghanistan. The U.S.-led Operation *Enduring Freedom* (OEF) under NATO command and the subsequent deployment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), since 2003, have benefited greatly from a shared risk perception and were legitimized in the first NATO invocation of Article 5 in the wake of the September 11 attacks.[1] Additionally, new Alliance members and aspirants shared a strong incentive to demonstrate their mettle as new and future allies, and partners from the South Caucasus and Central Asia gained new importance in NATO as a consequence of their involvement. Even so, their proffered support in Afghanistan operations further stressed their otherwise limited financial and manpower resources during a sensitive period in defense transformation efforts. Distances to the theater were often beyond limited lift capacity; likewise, the rationale for involvement often exceeded public understanding of national interest.

Operation *Iraqi Freedom* (OIF), commencing in 2003, has been a much tougher road to travel. First, some key NATO allies lacked a shared risk assessment with the United States. Second, the shifting rationales for the operation (from weapons of mass destruction [WMD], to al Qaeda links, to democracy building) have further undermined operation credibility among the societies of some allies and partners. Third, many new partners who gained NATO membership in 2004 have experienced the great financial burdens of ongoing expeditionary operations coupled with the perception of unfulfilled promises and expectations. On the other hand, OIF (as well as ISAF) has provided a catalyst to hasten defense reform among new members, expediting the creation of all-volunteer forces since conscripts have limited operational utility. Fourth, many participants were unprepared (because of wrong mandates, ROEs,

and lack of equipment and training) for the unexpected combat conditions on the ground. Their resulting casualties have eroded social support for OIF, putting great pressure on coalition governments that increasingly want to follow Spain's lead but are hesitant to take the first step.

In an effort to make European troops more employable in OOA operations, the United States has urged NATO to set goals of having each member nation able to deploy 40 percent of its forces abroad with at least 8 percent of each nation's military actually deployed at any given time. The motivation behind this idea would be to help sustain the ongoing shift from reliance on territorial defenses during the Cold War to expeditionary forces in the post–September 11 era. Even so, this objective may be exceedingly difficult for new NATO members to achieve, given the competing budgetary and political pressures to which they are subjected.

To succeed in developing more expeditionary capability, a new defense and force planning approach might include the following:

- NATO military authorities need to provide specific advice for specialized force planning, as increasing reliance on expeditionary operations has demonstrated that the Cold War concept of "national responsibility" for territorial defense forces is no longer useful.
- NATO military authorities and/or individual member governments should provide international training support (especially for counterterrorism operations) and develop a new approach to multinational formations.
- NATO should develop a new system to finance international military operations.
- NATO needs to focus on public information methods to provide contributing nations with sufficient information more effectively to sustain public support for military operations far from home.
- NATO needs to work with the European Union to explore how defense ministry activities in support of postconflict and counterterrorism-related missions could be more closely coordinated with the ongoing work of interior ministries.
- The United States and European NATO allies need to engage in a transatlantic dialogue that addresses the resulting limitations and obligations of Article 5 in the new post–September 11 environment.

Introduction

Over the last decade, NATO ranks have swelled with new members and partners, and the Alliance has become more proficient in conducting military operations beyond its immediate borders. These trends could be

seen as two sides of the same coin: just as the end of the Cold War freed many countries to seek closer association with NATO, so it also opened the door to direct Alliance intervention into situations of looming or actual conflict in ways that would have scarcely been imaginable a generation earlier. Indeed, many aspiring members have tended to view participation in these expeditionary operations as a kind of pathway into the Alliance. That, in a sense, has represented the opportunity raised by these operations. But what of their challenges? What kinds of lessons have new members and partners drawn from these operations? And how have these experiences influenced the ongoing efforts at defense reform?

Without question, the Partnership for Peace (PFP) program has played a direct role in shaping the willingness and ability of NATO aspirants and partners to engage in expeditionary operations. The program was designed to allow for practical military and political cooperation between NATO and nonmembers on a bilateral and multilateral basis and to address some of their security concerns. It also established the norm that partners should make military contributions to common security.[2]

Within 6 months of launching PFP, in 1994, there were roughly two dozen partners in the program, to include most of the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. PFP architects working to identify the most useful forms of cooperation found that military exercises and training generated great interest. Initially, about a dozen partners participated in the Partnership Coordination Cell (PCC) at Mons, Belgium, to coordinate and plan military exercises for search and rescue, humanitarian assistance, and peacekeeping operations. PCC terms of reference expanded to include "peace enforcement operations" after the December 1995 Dayton Accords and the NATO decision to allow partners to deploy peacekeepers with allies in the Bosnia Implementation Force (IFOR). Hence, as the Alliance began to transform its own armed forces to be capable of engaging in expeditionary operations, which it had never performed before, it also began to shape PFP partner armed forces to be more interoperable from within.

Against this background, we shall first look at the experiences of NATO partners (some of whom are now members) in mounting Balkans-related operations and then turn to the more recent challenges posed by operations in Southwest Asia.

Southeastern Europe: NATO's First Steps

In December 1995, NATO began deploying ground forces[3] in military operations outside the North Atlantic region for the first time.[4] PFP

military exercises in the Czech Republic in October 1995 paid enormous dividends for IFOR implementation in Bosnia and demonstrated the program's utility. Nine years later, the Bosnia military mission has finally concluded. NATO's Stabilization Force (SFOR) enforcement tasks have been completed, and the European Union (EU) assumed the presence mission (Operation *Althea*) in December 2004.

Meeting Bosnia's Challenges

Of the 13 PFP partners who participated in IFOR's 60,000-troop Operation *Joint Endeavor*, 8 aspired to join NATO: Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Albania. Hence, NATO membership incentives provided these partners with an opportunity to demonstrate their potential as future allies. Five remaining partners—Austria, Finland, Sweden, Russia, and Ukraine—did not consider themselves to be aspirants. The primary IFOR mission was to maintain cessation of hostilities, move Serbs and Croats into separate zones, and to provide support for civilian implementation of the accords.

Recognizing that maintaining a military presence would be necessary to stabilize the peace after the IFOR 12-month mandate, NATO initiated Operation *Joint Guard* in December 1996 and set up the reduced 32,000-troop Stabilization Force with Bulgaria, Ireland, Slovakia, and Slovenia also now participating. Originally with a 2-year mandate, SFOR had the same rules of engagement, included an increased level of support to civilian organizations, and was extended through November 1999. Its successor, Operation *Joint Forge*, had 20,000 troops in 2000; it continued to maintain the peace with roughly 11,900 troops in late 2003 and 7,000 by June 2004. In December 2004, it was replaced by the EU Operation *Althea*.

Generally, the Balkan experiences have taught NATO that it needs to think about public security in broader terms than just purely military tasks. The Alliance also learned that not only are law enforcement missions an essential part of postconflict situations, but also it must be able to promote military training in emerging democracies. IFOR/SFOR also showed that NATO was able to resolve contentious political issues at the operational level with Russia and advance U.S.–NATO cooperation with that country.

Comparing National Experiences

Hungary, with a population of 10 million, found participation in IFOR/SFOR challenging because its three roles and missions were different from what it had focused on in PFP exercises. First, for IFOR,

Hungary contributed a 416-member noncombat engineering battalion, which was reduced to 310 troops in SFOR. Since the battalion was not a standing unit and conscripts were prohibited from being deployed abroad, Hungary had to start from scratch, and when the Bosnia mandate was extended, they found it difficult to establish an adequate rotation base for its troops. Second, Hungary had to support the transit of foreign troops and temporarily station some in Hungary. As a practical matter, this meant that Budapest had to provide host nation support (HNS) to help foreign forces augment their logistics capacities—for example, by establishing a temporary IFOR/SFOR Operations Group and Logistics Directorate to contract for services needed by the U.S. staging base. Being a transit country and providing HNS proved especially challenging: Hungary found it difficult to coordinate military and civilian agencies at the national level and needed to modify its laws and regulations of financial, logistics, and administrative matters to provide adequate support.

Poland, the largest of the 10 new partners, has a population of 38 million, making it comparable in size to several current NATO members. Poland's 16th Airborne Battalion, its only unit with indigenous logistics, provided the core of its contribution of 670 troops to IFOR and 500 to SFOR. Thus, Poland began to restructure its forces to bring logistics first to the brigade level, then to the battalion level. Problems with Polish troops also resulted because of legal restrictions that required signing contracts with participating troops before deployment. Polish forces were also impeded by English language deficiencies and communications antennas that proved ineffective in mountainous areas. Also, numerous traffic accidents occurred because troops had trained on vehicles that were different from those with which they deployed in the field.

The Czech Republic (population: 10 million) had an IFOR contingent of 920 members to include a mechanized battalion with vertical-lift helicopters; its SFOR contingent comprised 644 troops. Problems were evident from the start because the Czechs lacked experience operating in multinational commands and had difficulty with the English language. The Czech experience confirmed the need to develop common signals and standards for the staff, intensify language training for personnel, and build a contingent of stand-by forces with independent logistics.

Romania (population: 20 million), as Hungary, contributed a noncombat engineering battalion of 200 troops to IFOR and SFOR that was created as a new structure with the assistance of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps command in Sarajevo. Its troops were drawn from several units so

that when replacement occurred, members returning to their units could share their experience.

The initial Bosnia-related experiences of Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Romania taught several important lessons. First, these countries recognized that expeditionary operations could cause severe strains and distortions to their defense budgets. Second, given the difficulties encountered in standing up their battalions, each acknowledged the necessity of pre-establishing standing units (including manpower and equipment, indigenous logistics, and timetable of tasks for activation) for future peace support operations. Third, it became clear the countries needed more adequately trained military officers with necessary language skills. Fourth, they recognized the need to change their training and rotation policies to emphasize more peacekeeping and less territorial defense and to modernize their communications equipment. Despite these challenges—and in no small measure because of them—Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Romania saw IFOR/SFOR as a useful training laboratory for deepening desired interoperability with NATO.

To be sure, the pressure on Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to continue demonstrating that they were "producers" of military security was somewhat relieved after participants in the July 1997 Madrid summit invited them to join the Alliance. On the other hand, the summit also enhanced PFP to be more relevant and operational so that partners could be more militarily interoperable with allies.[5] It also created the NATO–Russia Permanent Joint Council and NATO–Ukraine Commission to enhance consultation and cooperation with Russia and Ukraine, who were IFOR/SFOR participants but were not considered to be aspirant countries.[6]

Among new states and demographically smaller countries, the lessons were different. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were building forces from scratch, and each faced serious challenges to undertaking and sustaining expeditionary operations. The three states arranged to each send a contingent of forces within a Danish battalion for 6-month rotations. When Lithuania, with a population of 3.6 million, deployed its first platoon of 31 troops from Kaunas to Bosnia IFOR in February 1996, the public's initial criticism slowly turned to pride, which was further reinforced when the first Lithuanian was killed in April. Lithuania augmented its SFOR commitment to a company of 141 troops from October 1996 to October 1997 and from March to October 1999. Among lessons learned was the recognition that the country still had much to do and that it

needed to utilize returnees better. Lithuania participated on the platoon level, but with alternating their commitment to company level, it planned to move to battalion-level operations in 10 years. Latvia, with a population of 2.45 million, experienced increasing public support for IFOR/SFOR and Kosovo Force (KFOR) operations. Estonia, the smallest Baltic state at only 1.4 million inhabitants, contributed a rotating platoon to SFOR and found it particularly difficult to adjust to the dual demands of building forces capable of defending its own soil and of being interoperable with other NATO members and partners.

Bulgaria, with a population of 7.9 million, refrained from participating in IFOR and committed only a 35-troop engineering platoon to SFOR in July 1997, adding a transport platoon in June 1998. Thus, Bulgaria was slower to transfer any operational lessons into its military training, troop rotation planning, and English-language experience.

The same applied to Slovakia and Slovenia (with populations of 5.4 million and 2 million respectively), who, along with Bulgaria, Ireland, and Argentina, also joined SFOR in 1997. Slovakia sent eight officers to SFOR command headquarters, and Slovenia committed three helicopters and one transport aircraft for SFOR use. In contrast to Bulgaria and Romania, though, these new states—one a former Warsaw Pact member emerging from the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic and the other a former non-aligned republic of Yugoslavia—were building their military institutions

Table 1. Lessons Learned: Peace Operations

Bosnia IFOR/SFOR
Dayton Accords mandate
NATO membership incentives influenced participation

Operational Experience	Defense Reform
Limited utility of conscripts	Catalyst for more realistic reforms that balance territorial defense and support to international peace operations
Insufficient English-speaking personnel	Build dedicated rapid-deployment forces with independent logistics
Improve interagency cooperation for host nation support to transit and basing	Alter equipment, communications, training, and rotation policies
	Moderate budget distortions

from the ground up with low defense budgets and weak popular support for NATO.

Finally, whether building their forces from Warsaw Pact legacy structures or from scratch, NATO aspirants and partners learned that conscript-based forces posed major limitations for expeditionary operations. They would need to build stand-by forces with independent logistics and possess a sufficient cadre of well-trained English-speaking military personnel. In this and other respects, IFOR/SFOR operational experience became the catalyst for more realistic defense reform among aspirants.

The Kosovo Experience

To halt a humanitarian catastrophe involving acts of ethnic cleansing, NATO engaged in an air campaign, Operation *Allied Force*, against Serbia on March 23, 1999. When Yugoslav forces began to withdraw from Kosovo, on June 10, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1244—welcoming Yugoslavia's acceptance of the political solution to the Kosovo crisis—and authorized the establishment of an international security presence, which the North Atlantic Council (NAC) launched on June 12 as Operation *Joint Guardian*. By June 20, the Serb withdrawal from Kosovo was complete and NATO-led KFOR was well established.

During the April 1999 Washington summit, NATO was heavily engaged in the 78-day bombing campaign of Serbia. The first group of PFP partners—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic—had joined the Alliance on March 12. The NAC—now at 19 members—evinced problems not only in generating consensus to implement the bombing but also in utilizing the integrated military command during the campaign. The Washington summit's "Statement on Kosovo," which guaranteed territorial protection in the context of a temporally and spatially limited Article 5, contributed to the support of aspirant partners Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria.

The Washington summit approved a new Alliance Strategic Concept that underscored the importance of partnerships and launched a Defense Capabilities Initiative to improve operability among Alliance forces and, where applicable, between Alliance and partner forces in non–Article 5 operations. It also approved a third planning and review process (PARP) cycle that further enhanced partner force planning procedures to make them more closely resemble the NATO Defense Planning Questionnaire.[7] The summit introduced the Membership Action Plan (MAP) as a visible manifestation of NATO's "Open Door" (Article 10) policy with a clear set of allied expectations from prospective members.[8] The MAP Annual

National Plans generated by the nine[9] aspirant partners would allow each to set its own objectives and targets on preparations for possible future membership. This framework and experience prepared PFP well for the challenges of NATO peacekeeping operations.

When NATO decided to launch *Allied Force*, it cited UN Security Council resolutions calling for the Serbs to cease and desist in Kosovo, but it did not have a specific UN mandate as it did with resolution 1244 to commence with KFOR. Hence, NATO demonstrated that it did *not* require outside political mandates and was not bound by geography. Shared threat perception and political will were key elements in triggering NATO's military response. By the same token, while both the KFOR and IFOR/SFOR operations also built coalitions with allies and partners, they demonstrated weaknesses as well as strengths in NATO decisionmaking. Consensus-building could make the Alliance strong, but it could also prove unwieldy. While NAC political approval might work well for authorizing peacekeeping operations, problems are likely to occur during high-intensity military operations, as became evident during three phases in the Kosovo bombing campaign.[10] Another main challenge for NATO was the KFOR difficulty in establishing and maintaining unity of command when troops from a 3,600-member Russian airborne brigade moved into Kosovo *before* NATO troops and initially refused subordination to Alliance command. Special arrangements ultimately were made for the Russian forces, but all the other (allied, partner, and non-NATO) forces received orders from the KFOR commander through the KFOR multinational headquarters.

KFOR entered the province on June 12, 1999, with roughly 50,000 personnel, which leveled off at 46,000 a year later. Hence, in 2000, with SFOR holding at 20,000 troops, NATO's overall Balkan commitment was 66,000 troops.[11] Since then, the KFOR mission has been to build a secure environment within the Serbian province in which all citizens, irrespective of their ethnic origins, can live in peace and, with international aid, begin to foster democracy. KFOR responsibilities include deterring renewed hostility against Kosovo by Serbian forces, ensuring public safety and order, demilitarizing the Kosovo Liberation Army, participating in the international humanitarian effort, and supporting the international civil presence, the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Initially, NATO's 3 new allies and 16 PFP partners contributed to the KFOR operation. Seven partners who were interested in joining the Alliance—Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, and Bulgaria—shared the

common incentive to demonstrate their utility as potential allies. Nine partners—Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden, Switzerland, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan—were not aspirants.

New Members

KFOR was particularly challenging for the new NATO members, albeit not all for the same reasons. Hungary had concerns about potential Serb retribution on the 300,000 Magyars living in Yugoslavia's Vojvodina province. Initially, Budapest hesitated to provide direct support of military operations but later permitted NATO aircraft to use Hungarian airspace and airports to attack Serbian targets. Hungary first contributed a small contingent of epidemiologists to Albania Force (AFOR) to deal with Albanian refugees from Kosovo and then contributed peacekeepers to KFOR. When the government refused to increase funding, the 4 to 5 billion *forint* required for KFOR deployment costs necessitated cutting other planned defense reforms, and the Hungarian Defense Forces had difficulty maintaining and rotating approximately 500 troops in the two Balkan operations (a 324-member guard and security battalion to KFOR and 205 troops to SFOR missions). In 2002, after refurbishing the old Mostar bridge in Bosnia, the Hungarian SFOR contingent mission shifted from performing engineering functions to becoming a multinational specialized unit to deal with crowd and riot control.

Poland sent a company of 140 soldiers from the 21st Podhale Infantry Regiment to KFOR in May 1999. In June, the Poles committed the 18th Landing Battalion from Bialsko-Biala, the strategic reserve of their 453-troop SFOR unit in Bosnia. Ukraine committed 350 troops from the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion created in November 1997, and Lithuania added 30 soldiers from its Iron Wolf Brigade. The 800-troop KFOR unit had to transit by train through Romania and Bulgaria, with the Polish cabinet picking up the additional costs for AFOR and KFOR. When NATO asked for more support a year later, Poland, despite the great financial burden, agreed to deploy additional troops. By 2002, Poland maintained in KFOR an airborne battalion of 750 troops, with a Ukrainian supply company and helicopter detachment of 300 as part of the Ukrainian-Polish Battalion.

The Czech Republic early on sent an 80-person field hospital and transport plane to AFOR. A majority of Czechs opposed the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, and in May, the government, in cooperation with Greece, engaged in a controversial failed attempt to suspend the bombing temporarily. Citing cost constraints, the Czechs initially sent only a 175-troop

reconnaissance company when KFOR deployed but later augmented it. The Czechs found KFOR conditions more challenging than those of SFOR (where they now sustained 515 troops through rotations); internal defense ministry problems delayed not only troop pay but also the issuing of tenders for prefabricated houses, so Czech soldiers had to sleep in tents with winter approaching. In early 2002, the Czechs maintained 400 troops in Kosovo as part of the new Czech-Slovak Battalion.

Partners

Like some of its neighbors, Romania also had concerns about the NATO bombing campaign. Nevertheless, the Romanian government allowed the Alliance to use its airports and airspace during the bombing and permitted Polish and Czech peacekeepers to transit its territory to Yugoslavia. Romania later contributed a company of 89 troops from the 812th Infantry Battalion, which they had only formed in 1995. In support of Romania's ongoing defense transformation, the 1999 U.S. Defense Assessment (the so-called Kievenaar Assessment)[12] envisioned cutting Romania's force of 150,000 to 112,000 by 2004. In 2002, Romania deployed 350 troops in the two Balkan operations; it maintained an infantry battalion, an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) platoon, and engineer and military police detachments in SFOR, and two infantry companies in KFOR. By 2004, when KFOR had drawn down to 17,000, Romania maintained one infantry company of 86 military personnel there.

Bulgaria arrived in Kosovo later, in February 2000, with an infantry company of 50 troops. The Bulgarian lessons of Kosovo made clear that their own civil and military infrastructures were interdependent in staffing consultation and coordination mechanisms and that they needed to learn more about rules of engagement and the importance of the media. As a result, the Bulgarians modified their Plan 2004 (which was also heavily influenced by the Kievenaar Assessment). They decided to cut their armed forces from 82,000 to 40,000 plus 5,000 civilians and recognized the need to develop more effective civil-military cooperation to implement the plans.

Popular support for NATO in Slovakia and Slovenia diminished during the Yugoslav bombing campaign. After the October 1998 elections that saw the removal of Vladimir Meciar, Slovakia's new Defense Minister, Pavol Kanis, admitted "the great political mistake"[13] of not participating in SFOR. Thus, in 1999, Slovakia sent 40 engineering troops to AFOR and another 40 to KFOR. In September 1999, the Slovak AFOR troops transferred to KFOR, raising its commitment to about 90. After February 2002, the Slovaks maintained 100 troops as part of the Czech-Slovak Battalion in

Kosovo and in August added a 21-member air force detachment with helicopters to its SFOR headquarters detachment in Bosnia. Though Slovenia did not contribute any troops to KFOR in 1999, it did provide backfill of a platoon of military police to Sarajevo. In January 2000, Slovenia finally sent six public affairs and civil-military aides to KFOR headquarters.

The three small Baltic States maintained their SFOR commitment and responded to the KFOR challenge. In SFOR the Baltic Battalion was able to stand up its own commitment since 1998, thereby permitting SFOR augmentation to roughly 100 personnel. The three Baltic States now applied the same Baltic-Danish rotation scheme to KFOR. Lithuania, in addition, maintained a 30-troop platoon on rotation from its Iron Wolf Brigade with the Polish Battalion in KFOR and assigned nine policemen to the UN Interim Administration in Kosovo. Latvia sent eight medical specialists to AFOR from April to July 1999 and an EOD team as well as military police (MPs) to KFOR. Estonia also maintained a 22-troop MP unit in Pristina.

Two new partners from the South Caucasus made contributions to the Kosovo effort. In October 1999, Azerbaijan and Georgia each sent a 34-troop motorized supply platoon to KFOR.

Lessons Learned

Among lessons learned from Kosovo by NATO aspirants was how difficult it was to shift from territorial defense to expeditionary operations, as well as how to make adequate resources available for OOA operations *and* to fulfill their commitments to restructure and/or build their forces. Though both Balkan SFOR and KFOR operations were expeditionary, they were relatively close to home and were more easily understood by new NATO member and partner societies. These operations also demonstrated that NATO needed constabulary units, which are a better match for dealing with the postconflict period. In addition, they showed the need to develop civil affairs forces able to assist in judicial and correctional operations. In KFOR (as well as Bosnia SFOR), some participants had ROEs and other procedures that made their forces noninteroperable. Hence, NATO needs to grapple with the issue of how to get participants to standardize national mandates and ROEs for its OOA operations. What remains a continuing challenge to the NATO KFOR is the fact that Kosovo's final status remains undefined. Kosovo's lack of an end-state has inhibited the building of armed security forces there, which has thwarted planning for a military presence role.

Table 2. Lessons Learned: Peace Enforcement Operations

Kosovo KFOR

Operation *Allied Force* bombing: no outside mandate
Operation *Joint Guardian* KFOR: UNSCR 1244 mandate
Washington summit "Statement on Kosovo"
New and future allied incentives to participate
Kosovo final status undefined

Operational Experience	Defense Reform
Rules of engagement limit operational capability; need to standardize within NATO	Rebalance expeditionary and territorial forces
Command problems with Russia	Need for constabulary and civil affairs forces
Delays in troop pay and housing	Improve training and rotation policies
	Budget demands of expeditionary operations impact on other defense reforms and procurement plans

Southwest Asia: NATO's New Frontier

While NATO SFOR and KFOR operations continued in the Balkans, NATO invoked Article 5 for the *first* time in its history on September 12, 2001, one day after the al Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Rather than the United States coming to the defense of continental Europe, as most had envisioned employment of Article 5, NATO airborne warning and control systems protected the continental United States, NATO naval forces patrolled the eastern Mediterranean (Operation *Active Endeavor*), and the NAC began to "plan" operations in and around Afghanistan. The invocation of Article 5 caused discomfort on both sides of the Atlantic about its implications and extent of its obligations. As NATO moved further geographically from Europe, the shared threat perception so necessary and evident in the Balkans setting was no longer so evident for many allies.

But the war on terrorism has had another significant impact on the U.S. relationship with NATO in that continental Europe would *no* longer remain the center of U.S. defense concerns as its attention increasingly shifted to the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia to pursue its war on terrorism *with* support of European

allies. Since September 11, NATO members and partners have struggled, with varying degrees of success, to reshape their defense capabilities to deal with the new risks posed by global terrorism. Although the defense budgets of most longtime NATO allies have remained unchanged and the overall capabilities gap between the United States and other allies widened, NATO committed itself to a *broader* functional and *wider* geographic area of engagement.

To better address new NATO challenges, the November 2002 Prague summit endorsed the military Concept for Defense Against Terrorism that calls for "improved intelligence sharing and crisis response arrangements [and commitment *with* partners] to fully implement the Civil Emergency Planning (CEP) Action Plan . . . against possible attacks by . . . chemical, biological, or radiological (CBR) agents."[14] Also, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) adopted the Partnership Action Plan Against Terrorism (PAP–T) on November 22, 2002, that commits partners to take a number of steps to combat terrorism at home and share information and experience. This initiative called on partners to intensify political consultations and information-sharing on armaments and civil emergency planning; enhance preparedness for combating terrorism by security sector reforms and force planning, air defense and air traffic management, and armaments and logistics cooperation; impede support for terrorist groups by enhancing exchange of banking information and improving border controls of arms ranging from weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to small arms and light weapons; enhance capabilities to contribute to consequence management of WMD-related terrorism and civil emergency planning; and provide assistance to partner efforts against terrorism through the Political Military Steering Committee Clearing House mechanism and creation of a PFP trust fund.[15]

The Prague summit also invited seven partners to join the Alliance—Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, and Romania—and approved the Prague Capabilities Commitment, NATO Response Force, and new NATO command structure. These initiatives were intended to provide a more constructive burdensharing arrangement for NATO in the post–September 11 risk environment.

The June 2004 NATO Istanbul summit communiqué acknowledged the Black Sea's importance[16] (in effect moving it from an "out-of-area concern" to NATO area of responsibility) despite being met with French reluctance. With Romania and Bulgaria now in the Alliance, Ukraine working on an action plan since the Prague summit,[17] and Georgia

aspiring to join NATO, the Black Sea is being gradually transformed geopolitically. Though the Istanbul summit communiqué also acknowledged this new reality by now "putting a special focus on PFP partners in the Caucasus and Central Asia,"[18] whether the Black Sea actually becomes a bridge or buffer will largely depend upon Russia (whether it will support or work to prevent Ukraine's and Georgia's outreach to NATO).

A significant gap also appeared in NATO–EU cooperation and coordination of assistance to Central East European countries on antiterrorism efforts as well as some overlap, if not confusion, in each institution's area of responsibility. Police and border monitoring functions normally reside within the EU so-called Third Pillar purview, while military and certain intelligence activities fall within the NATO domain. EU antiterrorism cooperation takes place on an intergovernmental basis involving ministries of interior while NATO efforts involve coordination by a multilateral working group of national representatives. On the other hand, NATO enjoys greater credibility and effectiveness than the European Union among the South Caucasus and Central Asian partners.

Afghanistan: OEF and ISAF

As NATO began to plan operations in and around Afghanistan, PFP again demonstrated its utility in bolstering and facilitating NATO operations in the Caucasus and Central Asia by preparing local facilities and forces. Moreover, at their first meeting after the September 11 attacks, EAPC defense ministers reaffirmed their determination to exploit PFP to increase cooperation and capabilities against terrorism. Consistent with NATO's realization that it must place greater emphasis on meeting the challenges of asymmetric warfare, the EAPC approved new PARP ministerial guidance[19] and adopted an Action Plan 2002–2004 and a Civil Emergency Action Plan regarding possible chemical, biological, or radiological attacks.

In U.S. Central Command's (CENTCOM's) Operation *Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan, many NATO allies (including two new ones, Poland and the Czech Republic) and seven PFP partners rendered substantial assistance: five aspirant partners, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Lithuania, and Ukraine (which announced at Reykjavik in May 2002 that it wanted to join the Alliance), and two nonaspirant Central Asian partners, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

After the ousting of the Taliban regime, the ISAF was created in accordance with agreements at a Bonn conference in December 2001 and commenced operations in Afghanistan in January 2002. Initially led by the United Kingdom, Turkey, Germany, and the Netherlands for

successive 6-month periods, NATO finally assumed command on August 11, 2003. Nine PFP partners initially participated in ISAF, whose mission was limited to ISAF Headquarters, Afghan International Airport, and Multinational Brigade in Kabul. The partners included November 2002 Prague summit invitees Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, and Estonia; MAP partners Albania and Macedonia; and nonaspirant partners Finland, Sweden, and Austria. As the ISAF mission widened in December 2003, more allies and partners joined to support provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) in Kanduz and beyond. In June 2004, there were roughly 6,500 ISAF troops in Afghanistan.[20]

New Members

By the time of OEF in early 2002, Poland was able to deploy more units than it had for IFOR in December 1995—the 6th Air Assault Brigade, 25th Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Special Commando Regiment, 10th Armored Cavalry Brigade, the Operational-Reaction Maneuver Group (GROM), and some airmen, sailors, and military police. While maintaining its 750-troop airborne battalion in KFOR, Poland used Ukrainian An-124 transporters at great cost to deploy about 90 combat engineers and logistics troops to Bagram Airport and another 60 GROM commandoes to Kuwait subordinated to U.S. command. Poland also deployed a logistics ship of 300 personnel (including the Navy's elite Special Operations Forces *Formoza* unit) to support OEF.

The Czech Republic sent a nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons decontamination unit of 250 troops to Camp Doha, Kuwait, to OEF, as well as its 6th Field Hospital (30 doctors and 120 troops) to Bagram to provide medical support to ISAF. The extra costs for both operations were too large for the Czech defense budget, so they were sustained by floating government bonds. At the same time the Czechs maintained 400 troops in KFOR and 23 in SFOR, raising their total deployment to over 800 troops.

Hungary's support was far more restrained than that of Poland and the Czech Republic. It increased its presence in the Balkans to replace forces from other countries that went to Afghanistan. Hungary only established its liaison team at CENTCOM in October 2002 and then decided to deploy a medical contingent of 5 to ISAF in February 2003, augmenting its presence to 26 in mid-2004.

Invitees

With the Prague summit scheduled to occur barely a year after the commencement of OEF, the pressure upon pending NATO invitees to contribute forces to the Afghanistan contingency was keenly felt. Bulgaria provided host nation support to 6 U.S. KC–135 aircraft and 200 support personnel in Burgas—the *first* stationing of foreign forces in Bulgaria since World War II. It also deployed a 40-troop NBC decontamination unit to Afghanistan ISAF while continuing to maintain its small platoon contingents in SFOR and KFOR.

Romania in 2002 had four infantry battalions trained for expeditionary operations: the 812th Infantry Battalion in Bistrita, plus battalions in Bucharest, Craiova, and Iasi. While maintaining roughly 350 troops in the two Balkan operations, Romania initially participated in ISAF in January 2002 with a 25-troop MP platoon and one C–130 aircraft with staff officers and 14 crews. In addition, in June 2002, it deployed a 405-troop infantry battalion and a national intelligence cell to OEF to provide daily intelligence summaries for CENTCOM. Thus, in mid-2002, Romania deployed more than 800 troops in the three operations.

Slovakia, in addition to its 100-troop contingent in the Czech-Slovak Battalion in KFOR and augmented commitments of 21 troops with helicopters to the 8 at SFOR headquarters, deployed 2 personnel to CENTCOM in April and July 2002 and in August sent a 40-troop engineering platoon to OEF to help restore the Bagram airfield. The unit has maintained its presence with 6-month rotations and was augmented with 17 engineering troops to ISAF in May 2004.

Slovenia refrained from active participation in Afghanistan through the November 2002 Prague summit. It did provide some weapons, though, to the Afghani National Army and managed the demining fund. As compensation, Slovenia did further backfill SFOR. In February 2000, it added a medical unit to the MP platoon deployed to SFOR the previous year and contributed another MP platoon in September 2001. In January 2003, Slovenia sent a 109-troop motorized rifle company to join its 78 troops in SFOR. In March 2004, it finally sent a detachment of 18 special operations troops to ISAF to assume reconnaissance tasks in Kabul.

The Baltic States evinced more enthusiastic support by extending their cooperation into joint efforts to combat terrorism. Lithuania maintained its rotations in SFOR and KFOR along with its contribution of the 30-troop Iron Wolf Battalion platoon to the Polish Battalion in KFOR. It also contributed 40 special forces troops to the U.S.-led OEF

and 4 logistics officers and 2 medical personnel to the Czech field hospital in ISAF in Kabul. Smaller Latvia offered to increase its SFOR company by one and doubled its KFOR contribution to 25 troops. Estonia, the smallest of the three Baltic States, maintained its presence in SFOR and KFOR and deployed two EOD dog teams to the Kabul International Airport. The Baltic States' peacekeeping experience was difficult because their forces deployed without ROEs for force protection, and the new PRT model required them to provide assistance that they were unprepared to offer.

MAP Partners

NATO's three remaining MAP partners also participated in Afghan-related operations. In August 2002, Albania deployed a special operations platoon under Turkish command to ISAF, which was increased to 81 troops in 2004 to help secure the Kabul airport. Macedonia initially seconded 2 officers to the Turkish unit in ISAF, upping their commitment to 10 troops in July 2003 and 48 in 2004. Croatia joined the MAP at a meeting of the NATO foreign ministers at Reykjavik in May 2002. It deployed a platoon of 44 military police to ISAF to secure the Kabul airport in February 2003.

South Caucasus and Central Asian Partners

NATO's three South Caucasus and five Central Asian partners also took on new importance after September 11 because of their geographic location. While all eight partners offered airspace for military overflights, the Central Asian partners acquired initial importance for providing bases for Afghanistan operations. In spring 2002, representatives from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan arrived at CENTCOM, with the latter two partners providing bases to U.S. forces. Azerbaijan also contributed a 23-troop infantry platoon to OEF.

Lessons Learned

When U.S.-led coalition operations moved into Afghanistan after September 11, many new allies and aspirant partners found expeditionary operations more taxing to deploy and sustain at such great distances. Some also found it more difficult to convince their societies of the relevance of operating outside of Europe to their specific security and defense interests.

Nonetheless, Afghanistan operations on the whole have benefited from shared risk perceptions and were legitimized in NATO's first invocation of Article 5. Additionally, new Alliance members and aspirant MAP

Table 3. Lessons Learned: Expeditionary, Counterterrorism, and Peace Operations

Afghanistan OEF and ISAF
North Atlantic Council: Article 5 mandate
New and future allied incentives influenced participation
Southern Caucasus and Central Asia gain new importance to NATO

Operational Experience	Defense Reform
NATO assumes ISAF command August 2003	Accelerate professionalizing armed forces
Field experience for Polish special operations forces (SOF) and Czech nuclear, biological, and chemical decontamination units	Polish and Romanian SOF success encourages others to develop niche capabilities (SOF, military police, explosive ordnance disposal, military intelligence)
Rules of engagement limit provincial recon-struction teams and force protection	Defense budget limited scope of participation
	Need better public affairs
	Distance stresses limited lift capacity

partners shared an incentive to demonstrate their mettle as new and future allies, which they were able to do as a result of their successful defense reform efforts, and South Caucasus and Central Asian partners derived great importance from the Alliance operation. Finally, their proffered support in Afghanistan operations placed further enormous stress on their otherwise limited financial and manpower resources during a sensitive period in defense transformation efforts.

In reassessing NATO's expeditionary challenges, the significance of striving for convergence of threat perception cannot be overstated. The post–September 12 security environment necessitates a transatlantic dialogue to "clarify" our understanding about what constitutes *common* risks and obligations under new interpretations of NATO's Article 5. This has become more important as NATO has moved from defensive to expeditionary operations. The November 2002 Prague summit did not provide this clarification, nor did the June 2004 Istanbul summit after Iraq. Postponement of the discussion as the United States, with its new post–September 11 risk assessment, continues to press for European support that incurs greater risks and obligations for allies only corrodes the Alliance's foundation.

Iraq: Operation *Iraqi Freedom* and the Way Ahead

While Afghanistan has posed its share of difficulties for new NATO members and partners, Iraq has proven to be a far tougher road by comparison. This is true not only because of OIF's distinctive character but also because governments and their publics inevitably view Iraq in the context of the overall expeditionary commitments being borne at any one time and in relation to the defense capacities that each country possesses or hopes to acquire. Thus, the fact that *Iraqi Freedom* is not only the hardest but also the most recent and the most contentious expeditionary operation tends to magnify its various impacts.

The circumstances surrounding OIF's origins are well known. Since Saddam Hussein's attack on Kuwait in 1990, the United States had sought his removal from power. During the Clinton administration, the Iraq Liberation Act of October 31, 1998, endorsed the policy of regime change. The Bush administration emphasized regime change after the September 11 attacks, but President Bush downplayed such efforts in his September 12, 2002, speech before the UN General Assembly stressing the need to enforce UN resolutions requiring Iraqi disarmament.

When Iraq failed to comply with Resolution 1441, the Security Council *failed* to reach consensus on what consequences to impose. Russia, China, and NATO allies France and Germany felt inspections should be given more time, whereas the United States, United Kingdom, Spain, and Bulgaria disagreed. As a result, in contrast to SFOR, KFOR, and ISAF, the absence of a shared threat perception among some NATO allies contributed to lack of political will. The Bush administration then asserted on March 17, 2003, that diplomatic efforts had failed and gave Saddam a 48-hour ultimatum to leave Iraq. When that did not happen, Washington and London launched Operation *Iraqi Freedom* on March 19 that comprised 255,000 American, 45,000 British, 2,000 Australian, and 200 Polish troops (60 of whom served as combat soldiers).

After Saddam was toppled in Iraq on April 9, NATO provided intelligence and logistical support to the Polish-led multinational division,[21] comprised of many allies and 12 partners, which engaged in phase 4 stabilization efforts in Iraq. OIF participants included NATO Prague summit invitees Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia; MAP members Albania and Macedonia; MAP aspirant Ukraine; Azerbaijan and Georgia in the South Caucasus; and Kazakhstan in Central Asia.

New Members

Poland, with a total force of 150,000 in 2004 (50 percent being 12-month conscripts, with the goal to become 65 percent professional by 2010), maintains roughly 4,700 troops (6.2 percent of its total professional force) in expeditionary operations (see table 4). In addition to 1,000 troops in UN peacekeeping operations in Lebanon and Syria, it continues to deploy 350 troops in SFOR, 140 troops in AFOR, 800 troops in KFOR, and 2,500 troops in the Polish-led multinational division in Iraq that comprised 23 nations at its high point. These commitments and command responsibilities have placed enormous strains on the Polish armed forces and defense budget, resulting in the need to develop a new Strategic Defense Review (SDR), a process that has just commenced under the leadership of former First Deputy Defense Minister Andrzej Karkoszka. Some of the lessons learned from Poland's expeditionary operations and Iraq specifically are likely to be included in the forthcoming SDR. While Poland initially experienced some command problems, the Polish-led division functioned adequately. Its fundamental challenge was the need to revise its plans for conducting security and stability operations because combat conditions existed on the ground.

Facing an increasingly volatile environment in Iraq, Poland experienced numerous problems. First, within the multinational division under its command, each nation's mandate for participating in stabilization operations, including its ROEs, was subject to the control of national capitals, usually through direct parliamentary ratification. This had the effect of limiting the actions of certain national forces in combat conditions. Some governments felt they could not or would not inform their societies of altered missions because of increasing opposition to OIF. Although Poland made efforts to adjust ROEs at every 6-month force generation conference, they met with little success.

Second, the barriers to interoperability, standardization, and compatibility within the multinational division were sizable. This was particularly evident with command, control, and communications, as each country had its own equipment. Because of the diversity of languages in Poland's multinational division, English language proficiency was essential and, compared to earlier Balkan operations where this was a problem, the system functioned fairly well. Compounding the problem of barriers was the handling of civil affairs (CA) functions. In Iraq, as elsewhere, the CA mission required high leadership skills and professionalism, but platoon-level units were not adequately prepared to perform CA functions.

Table 4. Comparative Trends in Defense Establishments of New NATO Members

	Strength of defense establishments (military)				Conscription term (months)			
	1995	1999	2004	Future	1995	1999	2004	Future
Hungary	68,261	52,200	30,000	n/a	12	9	6	0 (2005)
Poland	278,600	205,000	150,000	SDR*	18	12	12	SDR*
Czech Republic	73,591	56,247	38,000	35,000	12	12	12	0 (2005)
Slovakia	52,015	45,483	30,000	20,000	12	12	9	0 (2005)
Romania	217,400	150,000	93,000	75,000	12	12	12	0 (2007)
Bulgaria	118,000	82,000	40,000	34,000	12	12	9	0 (2010)
Lithuania	8,000	12,200	12,700	n/a	12	12	12	n/a
Latvia	4,615	5,500	4,250	5,000	12	12	12	0 (2007)
Estonia	3,270	3,800	3,800	n/a	12	12	8–11	n/a
Slovenia	n/a	7,800	6,900	7,800	n/a	7	0	0
Total Force	820,000	618,000	409,000	n/a				
Professional	n/a	230,000	270,000	302,000				

*SDR: Strategic Defense Review

Hence, although by some accounts local Iraqis often responded more favorably to Poles and other former Warsaw Pact forces than to American and British forces, these units still lacked the requisite Civil-Military Cooperation troops.[22] Finally, because the Poles were prepared for crisis-response operations and not for war, they did not have adequate equipment. They needed armored Humvees (which the Poles, Lithuanians, and Latvians had been promised but did not receive) and timely and precise close air support (for example, Apache helicopters).

Among Poland's larger lessons learned from Iraq was the need to develop better human intelligence and more special operations forces, establish a deployable headquarters, and improve force reliability. Poland also needs to expand beyond its two-brigade deployment capability and needs more strategic lift (beyond its Spanish CASA aircraft and C–130s).

The future of Poland's involvement in Iraq remains in doubt. With two-thirds of the Polish population opposed to the Iraq operation by late 2004, Polish government support was eroding. Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski has announced that Polish troops will be significantly reduced after the January 30, 2005, Iraqi elections, and Prime Minister Marek Belka has suggested the gradual withdrawal of Polish troops through 2005.[23] Preventing the unraveling of the multinational division in Iraq is likely to become a major challenge and focus of attention during 2005.

Hungary, with a total force of 30,000 in 2004 (with no conscripts after December), maintains roughly 960 troops (3.2 percent of its total force) in expeditionary operations. In addition to 145 troops in UN peacekeeping operations in Cyprus and Sinai, it continues to deploy a contingent of 200 military police in SFOR, a guard and security battalion of 253 in Kosovo KFOR, a guard and support platoon of 41 in Macedonia Force, 26 troops in ISAF, and a logistics battalion of 300 troops in OIF. Subordinated to the Polish-led contingent and serving in Hillah, the Hungarians experienced one death and faced increasing public opposition to the war. The Hungarian OIF mandate ended on December 31, 2004, with roughly 60 percent of the population reportedly wanting *immediate* withdrawal.[24] Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany, who took over in September, proposed a total withdrawal by March 31, 2005.[25] Since the Hungarian *Fidesz* opposition, with 168 of 386 parliamentary seats, did not support extension, and the Hungarian parliament requires a two-thirds vote, the extension efforts failed. As a workaround to the OIF withdrawal, the Hungarians will backfill a company of 150 troops to

Afghanistan and plan to deploy a company of 150 security troops under NATO to Iraq, which does not require a parliamentary mandate.

The Czech Republic, with a total force of roughly 38,000 in 2004 (and which, like Hungary, abandoned conscription after December), maintains 33 troops in UN and 800 troops in NATO operations (2.2 percent of its total force). As the Iraq operation opened, the Czech Republic maintained 23 troops in SFOR, 400 in KFOR, 150 in ISAF, and about 300 chemical weapons troops along with Slovak colleagues in Kuwait on the ready if a chemical attack were to occur. When the war ended, the Czech-Slovak base moved to Basra in April 2003 under British command. The Czechs also stood up its Army's 7th Field Hospital in Basra in May. The base and field hospital at Basra both withdrew by year's end but were replaced by 80 military police. As the security situation deteriorated and roughly 70 percent of the Czech population opposed the war, Prime Minister Vladimir Spidla called for keeping the military police in Iraq.[26] The Czech government fell in April 2004, and Czech public opposition has continued to increase. The new government led by Prime Minister Stanislav Gross so far has vowed to keep the 80 military police in Iraq until its mandate ends on February 28, 2005.[27]

Slovakia, with a total force of 30,000 in 2003 (50 percent being 9-month conscripts), plans to have an all-volunteer force of 20,000 by the end of 2005. In 2004, Slovakia deployed 850 troops worldwide in UN and NATO operations (roughly 3.5 percent of its total force). Not only has Slovakia maintained 40 engineering troops in Afghanistan OEF and 17 demining specialists in ISAF, augmented its SFOR presence with a 21-troop helicopter unit in September 2002, and maintained roughly 94 troops in KFOR since February 2002, but it also has been active in Iraq. Perhaps influenced by its invitation and anticipated NATO accession in 2004, the Slovaks maintained an engineering company of 85 troops in Iraq, which they enlarged to 105 in January 2004 when the Czechs left.

Among Slovak lessons learned as Iraq developed into a conflict zone is the recognition that it needs more well-prepared troops for deployment and sustainability, as well as better equipment and technology upgrades. The Slovaks altered their earlier priorities to develop special forces and military police in 2004 because of the expense. Since the Slovaks experienced rotation problems, they now want to reform their territorial defense forces more rapidly and prepare for counterterrorism operations; hence, they have engaged in substantial defense ministry reform, updated

their Strategic Review 2020, and altered the Long-Term Armed Forces Development Plan for the military to become totally professional and smaller by the end of 2005. They want to build two full battalions: one mechanized battalion and one with engineering and NBC capability. The Slovaks want to move from deploying and sustaining 3.5 percent of their armed force in expeditionary operations to 8 percent. Although the parliament had to change legislation to permit Slovak military police to remain in Bosnia when the EU assumed the SFOR mission, there is no predetermined exit time for its Iraqi deployment. However, ever since the Slovaks lost three soldiers in mine-clearing activities in June 2004, public opinion has run strongly against the Iraqi operation. It remains unclear how this will affect the government's policy on Iraq.

Romania, with a total force of 93,000 (with 12-month conscripts) in 2004, plans to create an all-volunteer force of 75,000 by 2007. Romania maintains about 1,850 troops (2 percent of its total force) in expeditionary operations. In addition to 233 troops in UN missions, it maintained 860 troops in SFOR, KFOR, ISAF, and OEF. Romania's commitment to Iraq has also been substantial. Since July 2003, it has deployed 749 troops in both the British and Polish divisions; a 405-troop infantry battalion performing stabilizing and peace support missions in Nasiriyah under British command; a 149-troop engineering detachment performing mine clearing and construction; a 100-troop military police company; a 56-troop special detachment performing reconnaissance and intelligence; and 39 staff and liaison officers. In January 2004, Romania augmented its support with 56 personnel.

Romania's experiences in Iraq generally have reinforced its conviction that further defense reforms must focus on four key areas. The first is the acceleration of the transition from territorial defenses to expeditionary forces, the streamlining of its command structure, and the improvement of jointness and interoperability with other coalition forces. The second is developing new capabilities in transport (lift), NBC, logistics, and sustainability, with an emphasis on developing its special forces. The third is developing new command and control technology to operate in diverse theaters of operation. The fourth is to incorporate real operational experiences in simulating military exercises and to utilize returnees from operations to train outgoing soldiers. Returnees should become catalysts for change within the defense establishment; they need to change the mentality about the security culture and nature of conflict and work

their experiences into new doctrines and concepts to include how to fight networks such al Qaeda rather than traditional opposing military forces.

Possibly as a consequence of their own turbulent history under Nicolae Ceausescu, Romanians have absorbed the significance of the "war of ideas" for the current OIF operation (for example, the need to defuse violent insurgencies as part of building a durable peace in the wake of regime change). So far Romania has avoided the crisis of credibility for the Iraq action that has affected many other new allies because the Romanian society equates Saddam's despotic regime with their experiences under Ceausescu. In particular, Romanian casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq have not *yet* had an impact on public opinion. Romanian journalists, in an effort to avoid a replay of the Spanish experience, regularly visit the troops and attempt to promote the public's understanding of their country's role in the operation.

Bulgaria, with a total force of 45,000 (with 9-month conscripts since 2001), in 2004 maintains roughly 675 troops (1.5 percent of its total force) in OOA operations. In addition to 64 troops in UN operations and about 130 troops in its platoon-level commitments to SFOR, KFOR, and ISAF, Bulgaria deployed a 480-troop infantry battalion to Karbala subordinated to the Polish-led division in Iraq. As of October 2004, seven Bulgarian soldiers had been killed, and public opinion in Bulgaria has turned strongly against the Iraqi operation. Bulgarian defense officials have drawn a number of lessons from Iraq, some of which reinforce their experience elsewhere:

- The complexity of expeditionary operations requires *all* state institutions to cooperate.
- Gaining and sustaining public support is essential (wavering after six deaths in a December 27, 2003, car bombing attack in Karbala and the July 2004 beheading of two captured Bulgarians in Iraq).
- Different ROEs and national caveats have contributed to difficulties in coalition operations.

Even though Bulgarian contingents are formed on a voluntary basis, many officers and noncommissioned officers in NATO commands evinced shortcomings in language skills and logistics, and some have refused to serve in Iraq.

Bulgaria's Strategic Defense Review, begun after the November 2002 Prague summit, incorporates many of these lessons. Since the review stipulates that military changes must be in line with the changing security environment, Bulgaria is deactivating many surplus units (reducing

personnel from 45,000 to 39,000) and is creating a joint operations command in 2005 to deal with internal and external military operations. The defense review also stresses the need for lighter units and special operations forces.

Baltic Members

NATO's new Baltic members have also felt the buffeting effects of Iraqi operations. Lithuania's *Seimas* (parliament) has allowed 300 Lithuanian troops overall to serve on missions abroad. Since its total force consists of 12,700 troops (of which 4,700—37 percent—are 12-month conscripts and cannot be deployed), this represents roughly 3.8 percent of its deployable force. In addition to 8 in UN operations, 127 in the Balkans (SFOR and KFOR), and 6 in ISAF, 116 troops serve in Iraq; 54 troops patrol in Hillah under the Polish-led division; and another 49 are in Basra under the British, with 13 at command headquarters.

Latvia, with a total force of about 4,250 (of which 1,000 are 12-month conscripts), aspires to achieve a total professional force of 5,000 by 2007. In addition to its 25 troops in KFOR and 8 medical personnel in Afghanistan, Latvia provided 122 troops including EOD personnel to OIF. Since its total available force is 3,250 to serve on missions abroad, its 160 overseas troop deployment represents roughly 2 percent of its total available force. Latvia's experience with increasing popular support for OOA operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan came to an abrupt halt in Iraq operations, which a majority of the population now opposes. Among Latvian lessons learned is that the defense ministry needs to examine more closely the legal and political aspects of its ROEs for Afghanistan and Iraq and improve on problems with logistics and in sustaining operations. This was particularly evident in Iraq when Latvian troops deployed without adequate armor for force protection and sustained military casualties with one death in a demining operation, resulting in a serious loss in public support. The defense ministry is now concentrating on building its expeditionary forces and niche capabilities (such as EOD) and reviewing possibly shifting resources from territorial defense.

Estonia has a total force of 3,800 troops (of which 1,500 are conscripts serving either 8 or 11 months). Its maintenance of more than 100 troops abroad represents roughly 4 percent of its total deployable force. While maintaining its presence at SFOR headquarters, 22 military police at KFOR, and EOD deployments to ISAF, Estonia has responded to NATO pressure to support OOA operations and develop niche (EOD and

medical) capabilities to fill certain gaps. Estonia also has deployed roughly 55 special forces troops to OIF and has suffered 2 deaths. Estonia's experience in Iraq is similar to Latvia's in that the majority of its population's opposition to involvement in Iraq has broadened into opposition to *all* OOA operations. The Iraq experience may conjure up memories of the Baltic States' earlier experience when, as former Soviet republics, they were cajoled into Afghanistan "to establish democracy" after the December 1979 Soviet invasion. Some Estonians argue that an expeditionary mission's success depends more on its geographic location, claiming that their public would be more understanding and supportive of an operation in Moldova. They also express concern that if NATO terminates Baltic air policing, then the Baltic States might have to acquire their own air defense capability, which would further degrade an already limited territorial defense and OOA capability.

Each small Baltic military faces the dilemma of making tradeoffs between territorial defense and OOA operations. Concentrating on building a battalion for peace operations, they have focused on niche capabilities to include medics, divers, EOD personnel, and military police. They continue to feel they need territorial defenses in light of increasing concerns over the credibility of NATO's Article 5 guarantee. These concerns have increased because of NATO's difficulty in allocating a few helicopters for Afghanistan, which is "technically an Article 5 operation," and because some allies have expressed concerns that flying four F–16s in air policing over the Baltic States might be "provocative." The Baltic States also see Germany, which is much larger and no longer a front-line state, continuing to allocate substantial resources to territorial defense. Only large countries such as Germany have the capacity to transform their militaries *and* make Article 5 credible. No matter how much a small Baltic state might contribute to NATO's expeditionary force, it will always remain a token in terms of Article 5.

Slovenia, with a total force of 6,900 troops, ended conscription on September 9, 2003. (In 1999, Slovenia had a force of 7,800 troops, of which 3,160—about 37 percent—were 7-month conscripts.) In addition to 16 troops in UN operations, Slovenia maintains roughly 210 troops in NATO OOA operations for a total of 226 in 2004, representing 3 percent of its total force. It maintains 6 at KFOR who were sent in 2000 and in January 2003 added a 109-member motorized rifle company to its 78 troops in SFOR. In March 2004, Slovenia finally sent a detachment of 18 troops to ISAF to assume reconnaissance tasks in Kabul. By refraining

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Table 5. Lessons Learned: Stabilization and Reconstruction

Iraq OIF

No UN or NATO consensus
Diminishing new ally incentives
Alternating OIF rationale
Casualties erode public support
Southern Caucasus and Central Asia gain importance

Operational Experience	Defense Reform
Polish-led multinational division—adequate	All-volunteer force completion or Strategic Defense Review acceleration
NATO assistance to Polish command less than expected	Defense budget distortions
Wrong rules of engagement, equipment, and mandates for combat	Need more special operations forces, force protection, close air support, lift
National command, control, and communication compromises operation	Need better intelligence support, deployable headquarters, and sustainability
Need better training for civil affairs	Need better public information

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from OIF participation, Slovenia has avoided the negative societal impact experienced by other participants.

MAP, South Caucasus, and Central Asian Partners

Two of NATO's three MAP partners have made serious efforts to demonstrate their support for the Alliance in Iraq. Albania, with a population of 3.3 million, sent 70 special forces troops to support the U.S. 101st Airborne Division in Mosul while continuing to maintain 81 troops in Afghanistan. Macedonia, with only 2 million inhabitants, deployed 37 special forces troops while maintaining 48 troops in ISAF. From the South Caucasus, Azerbaijan has contributed 150 troops while maintaining its 23-troop infantry platoon in OEF. Georgia, with a population of 4.3 million and a total force of 10,000 (of which 5,000 are 12-month conscripts), initially sent 70, later increased to 159, and has announced that it might raise the commitment to 850 troops in the future. Armenia declared in September 2004 that it would send 50 troops sometime in the future. Finally, from Central Asia, only Kazakhstan has sent any troops (25 personnel). To date, the expeditionary experiences of these partners have

been so limited that their impact on force planning has been minimal. However, if Georgia carries through with its substantial OIF deployment, the impact will likely be swift and significant.

Lessons Learned

In marked contrast to expeditionary operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan, NATO allies lacked a shared risk assessment on the need for operations in Iraq. That fact, compounded with a stabilization mission far more difficult than was generally anticipated, has eroded support. Second, the frequent changes in rationale for the operation (from WMD, to al Qaeda links, to democracy building) have undermined OIF credibility among the societies of some allies and partners. Third, many partners who became new NATO members in 2004 have experienced great operational and financial burdens coupled with the perception of unfulfilled promises and expectations. Fourth, OIF (as well as ISAF) has provided a catalyst to real defense reform among new members, expediting the creation of all-volunteer forces since conscripts have limited operational utility. Fifth, many participants were unprepared (wrong mandates, ROEs, and lack of equipment and training) for the unexpected combat conditions on the ground. The resulting casualties have eroded social support for OIF, putting great pressure on coalition governments who increasingly *want* to follow Spain's lead but hesitate to be the one to take the first step.

Implications for NATO Force Planning

Over the past decade, NATO's 10 new members have substantially downsized their Warsaw Pact legacy militaries and decreased reliance upon conscription, while simultaneously professionalizing and restructuring their forces to develop a deployable, sustainable expeditionary capability. The newly created states not only were small but also had to create defense establishments and armed forces from scratch while maintaining concerns about territorial defense. The comparative trends in the defense establishments (see table 4) indicate that when IFOR commenced in 1995, the 10 countries had a total of 820,000 conscript and professional troops in their defense establishments. When KFOR commenced in 1999, the countries had roughly 618,000 conscript and professional troops available, and when OEF/ISAF and OIF were ongoing in 2004, they had 409,000 troops—an overall decrease of 50 percent since 1995 and 33 percent since 1999.

Accompanying this downsizing of larger Warsaw Pact legacy armed forces and formation of the small armed forces of "new" countries has been a slow but steady buildup of professional deployable forces. Compared to the 230,000 professional troops produced by the 10 countries' defense establishments in 1999, they had 270,000 available in 2004. By 2007, these countries should produce a pool of roughly 302,000 professional troops (an overall increase of about 30 percent) that theoretically could be available for expeditionary operations.

Since only 3 to 5 percent of NATO's 2.5 million available troops were deployable in 2004, American frustration has been rising with the rather slow transformation of NATO's Cold War territorial defense forces to "usable forces."[28] In an effort to make European troops more capable for expeditionary deployments, U.S. Ambassador to NATO, Nicholas Burns, on October 13, 2004, reportedly urged that NATO should meet its goals of having each member nation able to deploy 40 percent of its forces abroad with at least 8 percent of each nation's military actually deployed at any given time.[29]

While improving expeditionary capability is clearly a vital objective for the Alliance, one needs to ask whether this U.S. proposal is a realistic one for the "new" NATO members who have either been engaged in serious downsizing and transformation of their inherited Warsaw Pact conscript-based armed forces or have been building their armed forces from scratch while simultaneously supporting NATO operations for the past 9 years. The U.S. European Command's (EUCOM's) annual security cooperation plan includes individual country plans to help partners and allies in activities ranging from developing their militaries to operate in expeditionary operations (which require more professional soldiers, assistance in preparing SDRs, and resolution of training differences among the national forces), to democratization efforts in the west Balkans. However, many new NATO allies and partners have expressed concern about the future of such assistance. Even though 19 of the 31 National Guard State partnerships are in EUCOM, security cooperation activities will likely become increasingly constrained because 60 percent of the U.S. forces have left Europe since the fall of the Soviet Union, and more will likely leave Germany as the United States begins to implement its new global defense posture in 2005. Thus, the very pressures that are stretching European military capabilities to operate in distant venues are also stretching U.S. capacities to assist and strengthen the Europeans toward this goal.

Unless NATO introduces and institutionalizes a new approach to defense and force planning and transformation, any capabilities goals adopted at Washington in 1999, Prague in 2002, and Istanbul in 2004 will likely remain only "headline" goals. To succeed in developing more expeditionary capability, NATO's new defense and force planning approach might include the following:

■ *NATO military authorities need to provide specific advice for specialized force planning.* NATO's experience in Bosnia IFOR/SFOR, Kosovo KFOR, Afghanistan ISAF, and support to the Polish-led multinational division in OIF demonstrates that the Alliance needs to develop a new approach to joint training. NATO needed 30 nations to field 50,000 troops in Bosnia in 1996 and stretched to field 66,000 troops in both SFOR and KFOR in 2000. This became particularly evident in Afghanistan in 2004 with NATO efforts to fill PRTs. NATO's Cold War concept of "national responsibility" for territorial defense forces is no longer useful for expeditionary operations.

■ *NATO's military authorities and/or member governments should provide international training support (especially for counterterrorism operations) and develop a new approach to multinational formations.* NATO's 45 years of Cold War experience that national-level military operations below corps were "folly" has been turned on its head with the new need to provide expeditionary forces with *niche* capabilities. But the 10 members that have joined since 1999 have very different capacities to develop capabilities. While this task will be easier for those countries that are building their armed forces from the ground up (the three Baltic States, Slovenia, and, to some extent, Slovakia), they are small states. It is more difficult for the larger states that inherited Warsaw Pact conscript-based force structures (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Romania). Those deep inside NATO who are no longer on the front lines of Cold War–era threats (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovenia) will not feel the urgency to maintain territorial defense forces and will find it easier to develop expeditionary forces. The states that feel the need to maintain adequate territorial defenses because they feel threatened (Poland and the three Baltic States) will develop specialized units, but their participation will be more limited since they will be retaining a two-tiered armed force.

■ *NATO should develop a new system to finance international military operations.* New members have found it difficult to finance their military participation in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. In contrast to UN peacekeeping activities (for which participants are reimbursed), most new members have had to finance expeditionary operations by increasing defense budgets, postponing modernization, increasing debt, and/or borrowing funds by floating government bonds.

■ *NATO needs to focus on public information methods to provide contributing nations with sufficient information to sustain more effectively public support for expeditionary operations far from home.* Since the media in many new NATO member and partner countries have yet to mature, NATO public affairs must be more effective and aggressive in disseminating objective information about overseas operations to bolster societal support for participating governments.

■ *NATO needs to enhance the coordination of security assistance activities with the European Union.* During the Cold War, NATO traditionally had an aversion to dealing with interior ministries because protecting the NATO pipeline, host nation support, and seaports and airports were "national" responsibilities. Today, however, NATO is performing police-type functions in the western Balkans, in part because in Macedonia and Albania, different ministries (defense and interior) control the borders and the different institutions cannot communicate with each other. Hence, NATO must fill the gap. In Kosovo and Bosnia, NATO has had to work with the ministries of interior, UNMIK, and the police. SFOR also has taken preventive actions against possible terrorist cells and organizations linked to the terrorist network. In sum, the Balkans situation creates a "special case" for NATO.

More generally, NATO should look at ways of further expanding its effective coordination with interior ministries. While they have *not* formally been involved in defense planning, the ministries have been present in many committees (for example, Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee), exercises (such as NATO Crisis-Management Exercise 02), and now in the MAP process. In addition, as a result of the dual EU and NATO enlargement, 19 of 26 NATO members have been in the EU since May 2004. This creates the conditions for more effective political-military coordination and allocation of resources of both organizations, *if* sufficient political will exists.

■ *Finally, the United States and European NATO allies need to engage in a transatlantic dialogue that addresses the resulting limitations and obligations of Article 5 in the "new" post–September 11 environment.* Even if all the relevant factors are successfully addressed, any future NATO operation after Iraq will likely require something tantamount to a consensus. The NATO allies need to go back to basics and discuss what common risks, if any, are shared and what mutual obligations ensue. If some common ground is found, the decision must be made as to which organization (EU and/or NATO) should take the lead in responding to specific functional and/or geographic threats and how to best coordinate the support of the other. Postponing or avoiding this discussion will only make the situation worse for both sides of the Atlantic.

Notes

[1] On February 10, 2005, NATO defense ministers agreed to expand the Alliance's peacekeeping mission (ISAF) to the western part of Afghanistan, resulting in NATO responsibility for over 50 percent of the country. Ministers also agreed, in principle, that NATO should enhance its coordination with the U.S.-led Operation *Enduring Freedom* and eventually take responsibility for security throughout Afghanistan, including by bringing OEF under NATO command, ideally by 2006.

[2] These occurred in the form of Individual Partnership Programs and self-differentiation. It marked the establishment of a wide environment of cooperation to include participation in the Planning and Review Process (PARP), peace support operations in the Partnership Coordination Cell, transparency, and democratic oversight of the military.

[3] Beginning in November 1992, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) implemented a series of maritime, air surveillance, and interdiction operations in support of the United Nations embargo on arms deliveries to Yugoslavia.

[4] Article 6 of the North Atlantic Treaty stipulates that NATO's collective defense obligations (under Article 5) apply to the territory of the parties in Europe and North America and their forces deployed in adjacent seas and airspace. Thus, NATO military actions against and in the former Yugoslavia were *out-of-area operations*. Other treaty provisions place no limit on NATO's geographic area of potential action.

[5] The second planning and review process cycle, launched in October 1996, introduced interoperability objectives to permit partner forces to operate with allies. Eighteen partners signed up.

[6] It replaced the North Atlantic Council with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

[7] In essence, Partnership Goals (PGs) for Interoperability and for Forces and Capabilities would replace the old interoperability objectives in 2000. The new partnership goals aimed to develop specific armed forces and capabilities that partners could offer in support of NATO operations and permit EAPC partners greater participation in deliberations involving exercise planning.

[8] The Membership Action Plan (MAP) identified five partner areas (political/economic, defense/military, resources, security, and legal) that were necessary to develop the capabilities needed for membership.

[9] Croatia joined Partnership for Peace only after the Washington summit on May 25, 2000; in May 2002, it joined the MAP.

[10] Hence, during such military contingencies, perhaps either the NATO Secretary-General or the major contributors to the military operation should be granted more authority to facilitate decisionmaking. For an excellent exposition of this issue, see Leo G. Michel, "NATO Decisionmaking: Au Revoir to the Consensus Rule?" *Strategic Forum* 202 (Washington, DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, August 2003).

[11] Both missions reduced in size over the years; Kosovo Force declined to 17,000 in fall 2004, while Stabilization Force (SFOR) maintained 7,000 troops. In December 2004, Bosnia became the first real test case for the European Union (EU) when SFOR shifted from NATO-led military operation to EU security/police support operation. Even if the EU is able to meet the operational challenge with adequate resources, because of double-booking of its forces, it is not clear that it would be able to support NATO simultaneously in another contingency.

[12] The U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense, under the direction of Major General Buzz Kievenaar, initiated defense assessments of Baltic defense forces in 1998 to provide the Baltic nations with recommendations to develop their own defense plans and to allow the United States to refine its own engagement plans. Similar assessments were conducted with Romania and Bulgaria in 1999, with Slovenia and Slovakia in 2000, and Albania, Macedonia, and Croatia in 2001.

[13] Bratislava TASR, December 10, 1998.

[14] Prague Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government of the Atlantic Council in Prague on November 21, 2002. *NATO Press Release* (2002)127, November 21, 2002.

[15] See paragraphs 16.1 through 16.5. Partnership Action Plan Against Terrorism, November 22, 2002.

[16] Istanbul Summit Communiqué Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, June 28, 2004, para 41. *NATO Press Release* (2004)096, June 28, 2004.

[17] On July 15, 2004, President Leonid Kuchma issued a decree removing Ukraine's preparations for NATO membership from Ukraine's official military doctrine. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newsline* 8, no. 141 (July 27, 2004). As Sergei Karaganov has noted, this could only be a temporary measure: "The next president could change the doctrine and restore it." Valeria Korchagina, "Putin Tells the West Not To Meddle in Ukraine," The Moscow Times.com (July 27, 2004).

[18] Istanbul Communiqué, para. 31.

[19] The EAPC met December 19, 2001. Now 19 partners participated in PARP as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan followed Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia.

[20] NATO, In Afghanistan Fact Sheet, September 2, 2004 (14:24).

[21] SHAPE assisted Warsaw's orientation and force generation conferences, the NATO School at Oberammergau helped train the multinational staff, AFSOUTH supported the Warsaw planning staff on logistics planning, NATO assisted the Poles to establish a secure satellite communications link and provided intelligence sharing and information management. *NATO Press Release* (2003)93, September 3, 2003.

[22] Poland's Cold War–era contacts with Iraq (including extensive Polish-run construction projects) helped to give Poles a familiarity with the country and its people. Senior Polish officers, interview with author, October 5, 2004.

[23] Judy Dempsey, "Vowing Iraq Pullback, Polish Leader Wins Vote," *International Herald Tribune*, October 16, 2004.

[24] Andras Simonyi, appearance on *Washington Journal*, C–SPAN, November 23, 2004.

[25] Richard Beeston, "Hungarian Leader Pledges Support for Operation in Iraq," The Times Online, November 20, 2004.

[26] *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newsline* 8, no. 50 (March 16, 2004).

[27] Czech News Agency, September 15, 2004.

[28] At the 2004 Istanbul summit, NATO agreed to "usability" goals for ground forces of 40 percent deployability and 8 percent sustainability. See NATO Briefing, December 2004 (Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division), 6.

[29] Josh White, "NATO Considers Joint Mission in Afghanistan," *The Washington Post*, October 14, 2004.

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